

Linguine with Clams and Chorizo

This is the sort of dish that Nonna would serve on the good plates, appearing at Christmas or other festive celebrations throughout the year. When it's served on an ordinary day, the world becomes magical. The addition of chorizo plays with the Spanish pairing of chorizo and shellfish, a happy, centuries-long combination. We think it makes the party all the more glorious.

Ingredients

1 tablespoon sea salt
3 tablespoons kosher salt
8 ounces chorizo, diced into $\frac{1}{3}$ inch cubes
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra virgin olive oil
6 cloves garlic, minced
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon crushed red pepper, or more to taste
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup white wine
4 dozen littleneck or manila clams
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped flat leaf parsley
1 pound linguine

Directions

Scrub the clams well and purge for 20-30 minutes in a bowl of water with 1 tablespoon sea salt. Drain and set aside. Discard any clams that are cracked or open and any that will not close when tapped on a countertop.

Bring a 6 quart pot of water to a boil with 3 tablespoons salt.

In a deep skillet with a lid, heat 1 teaspoon of the olive oil over medium heat and render the chorizo until it's beginning to brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Drain the excess grease and discard if there is more than 1 tablespoon of grease in the pan. Add the remaining olive oil, garlic and crushed pepper and cook for 30 seconds. Add the white wine and clams. Cover and bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. In 5 minutes, check to see if the clams have opened. Transfer any open clams to a bowl, leaving those that have not opened in the pot. Cover the pot and simmer for another 5 minutes before checking to see if they've opened. Discard any unopened clams, as they may be dead. Remove cooking liquid from heat and set aside.

Set aside 12 clams in a bowl. Shuck the remaining clams into the bowl along with their liquor, discard their shells and cover with foil. (Or alternately, if you like minced clams, chop the clam meat on grooved cutting board, being careful not to lose any of the clam liquor, and add to the bowl with the 12 clams. Cover with foil).

Add the linguine to the boiling salted water. Cook until al dente according to the package instructions.

Reserve 1 cup of pasta water and set aside. Drain the linguine.

Meanwhile, bring the reserved clam and wine mixture back to a simmer. Add pasta to the skillet, then add the parsley and reserved clams with the reserved clam and wine mixture and toss methodically to coat the pasta, adding $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of pasta water at a time as needed to create a silky smooth sauce. Transfer to a serving platter, arranging the 12 clams in their shells on top of the bowl. Garnish with additional crushed red pepper, if desired, and serve immediately.

total time: 40 minutes

active prep: 10 minutes

serves: 4

difficulty: *easy*